

COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

The Island County Council of Governments met in Regular Session on March 23, 2011 in the Commissioners' Hearing Room (Room # 102B), Annex Building, 1 N.E. 6th Street, Coupeville, Washington. The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Conard at 9:01 a.m.

The Council of Governments Minutes and recordings of meetings may be located at <http://www.islandcounty.net/commissioners/documents/2011/2011COG.html>

Members Present: Nancy Conard, Mayor, Town of Coupeville
Angie Homola, Island County Commissioner
Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Kelly Emerson, Island County Commissioner
Jim Slowik, Mayor, City of Oak Harbor
Benye Weber, Commissioner, Coupeville Port District
Curt Gordon, Commissioner, South Whidbey Port District

Members Absent: Paul Samuelson, Mayor, City of Langley

Also Present: Scott Dudley, Councilmember, City of Oak Harbor
Jennifer Meyer, Community Planning & Liaison Officer, NASWI
Community members

Agenda item number 5, "Request from the City of Langley to revise use of .08 Rural Economic Development Funds", was removed from the agenda by Chair Conard.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

By unanimous motion the February 23, 2011 minutes were approved as presented. Commissioner Homola was not present for this vote.

Upon returning to the meeting room, Commissioner Homola read a prepared statement which she requested to be included in the February 23rd minutes on page 2, under "Other Items of Mutual Concern". This statement detailed her assessment of the exchange that took place during Mayor Slowik's update on his upcoming Washington DC trip. Council discussion ensued on the appropriateness of adding a verbatim statement to summary minutes. It was suggested that as these are summary minutes, verbatim inclusions are not fitting. (Note: COG meetings are audio recorded and available via the County's website.)

APPROVAL OF VOUCHER

By unanimous motion a voucher in the amount of \$1,101.04 was approved as presented, in payment to Britt Conn, Sustainable Whidbey Coalition Coordinator.

UPDATE OF SWC BUDGET AND ACTIVITIES

Chair Conard handed out the Sustainable Whidbey Coalition Proposed Budget for 2011, which was approved by the Sustainable Whidbey Steering Committee. Plans for 2011 include exploring Grant possibilities and the launch of Whidbey Green Seal, a recognition program for Whidbey Island businesses promoting sustainable practices within their business.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Ferry Update:

Commissioner Price Johnson provided the update commenting that the bills continue to move. SB 5406 (Ferry management) and SB 5742 (funding for Ferry replacement) are both with the Rules Committee. The 2.5% Ferry Fare increase for next year is still on the table. Commissioner Price Johnson will keep Council apprised as there will be time for advocacy. Council members were asked to keep everyone apprised if you hear anything.

REET Funds:

Commissioner Homola reported that HB 1953, which allows for REET funds to be used for operation and maintenance of existing capital projects, is moving forward. These funds are critical for counties that do not have utility taxes or other revenue generating possibilities. Discussion continued on the current status of County Parks.

Other:

Commissioner Price Johnson commented that SB 5553, which adds web site posting requirements for all committees, would result in more staff time.

Mayor Conard is optimistic that the Public Works Trust Fund will remain. Governor Gregoire has the power to line-item veto and keep it. Mayor Slowik announced that Oak Harbor has an approved project on the list for these funds.

Commissioner Homola mentioned that HB 1786 has not moved since February. This bill would allow for Veteran assistance initiatives to be considered stand-alone levies and therefore not subject to the 1% cap.

OTHER ITEMS OF MUTUAL CONCERN

Mayor Conard discussed her recent attendance at an Affordable Housing Forum. As it appears there is very little money to fund affordable housing, "out of the box" thinking must be used. Council discussed possible alternatives to new housing, including boarding, guest cottages, and accessory buildings. Cities and counties will need to look at Land Use Codes and density issues to see if there are opportunities there.

Commissioner Price Johnson gave an update on the Freeland Sewer District but suggested that a representative of the sewer district would be able to give a more detailed update and answer Council questions.

IDENTIFY ISSUES FOR NEXT MEETING

For the April 27th meeting:

- Sustainable Whidbey Coalition Green Seal Project
- Collective Volunteer Center
- Puget Sound Partnership Proposal, as suggested by Morgan Schneider/PSP at February 23rd COG meeting

For May 25th meeting:

- Update reports from EDC Fund recipients:
 - Freeland Sewer Phase 1
 - Oak Harbor Pioneer Way
 - South Whidbey Port District

COG members will receive copies of original grants prior to meeting for review.

In consideration of the Association of Washington Cities Annual meeting scheduled for June 22-24, a request was made to re-schedule the June 22nd COG meeting. During discussion for possible new dates, it was revealed that the Association of Washington Counties Annual meeting is June 8-10. As a result, it was the consensus that the June meeting be cancelled.

Council members agreed that a bi-annual update on EDC activities would be in order. This could be included on July's agenda.

Mayor Slowik spoke about his trip to Washington DC, which included meetings with Federal legislators and Pentagon Officials. Senator Murray is an advocate, along with Congressman Larsen, for the basing of the P-8's at NASWI.

Commissioner Price Johnson discussed the State of Emergency declared on Susannah Drive in regards to mud slides. Residence access is in jeopardy but no homes.

Mayor Conard updated members on Coupeville's water system. With the new larger well, they will be retiring some smaller wells.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Dated this 27th day of April, 2011.


APPROVED